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Manchester*

THE INSTITUTION

OF

KAISERSWERTH ON THE RHINE,

FOR THE

Practical Training of Deaconesses,

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE REV. PASTOR FLIEDNER,

EMBRACING THE SUPPORT AND CARE OF

A HOSPITAL, INFANT AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS,

AND A FEMALE PENITENTIARY.

By Florence Nightingale

LONDON:


PRINTED BY THE INMATES OF THE

LONDON RAGGED COLONIAL TRAINING SCHOOL,
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THERE is an old legend that the nineteenth century is to be the “century of woman.” Whatever the wisdom, or the foolishness, of our forefathers may have meant by this, English women know but too well that, up to this time, the middle of the century, it has not been theirs. Those who deny, are perhaps even better aware of it, than those who allow it.

And whose fault is this? Not man’s. For, in no century, perhaps, has so much freedom, nay, opportunity, been given to woman to cultivate her powers, as best might seem to herself. Man leaves her room and space enough. She is no longer called pedantic, if her powers appear in conversation. The authoress is courted, not shunned. Accordingly, the intellectual development of English women has made extraordinary progress. But, as the human being does not move two feet at once, except he jump, so, while the intellectual

foot has made a step in advance, the practical foot has remained behind. Woman stands askew. Her education for action has not kept pace with her education for acquirement. The woman of the eighteenth century was, perhaps, happier, when practice and theory were on a par, than her more cultivated sister of the nineteenth. The latter wishes, but does not know how, to do many things; the former, what she wished, at least *that* she could do.

What then? Shall we have less theory? God forbid. We shall not work better for ignorance. Every increase of knowledge is a benefit, by showing us more of the ways of God. But it was for the increase of "wisdom," even more than of knowledge, that David prayed—for wisdom is the practical application of knowledge.

"Not what we know, but what we do, is our kingdom," and woman, perhaps, feels that she has not found her kingdom.

Would the world be much the worse if no woman had ever written, if none existed of all the works of all the authoresses? It is but a question we would ask.

Does woman often pursue an intellectual object for any long period for its own sake? Does not her age of acquiring generally cease, whether she be *single* or *married*, whether she have time or not, for her studies, between the ages of twenty and thirty? It is but an inquiry we would make.

It has become of late the fashion, both of novel and of sermon writers, to cry up "old maids," to inveigh against regarding marriage as the vocation of all women, to declare that a single life is as happy as a married one, if people would but think so. So is the air as good an element for fish as the water, if they did but know how to live in it. Show us *how* to be single, and we will agree. But hitherto we have not

found that young English women have been convinced. And we must confess that, *in the present state of things*, their horror of being “old maids” seems perfectly justified; it is not merely a foolish desire for the pomp and circumstance of marriage—a “life without love, and an activity without an aim” is horrible in idea, and wearisome in reality.

How many good women every one has known, who have married, without caring particularly for their husbands, in order to find—a very natural object—a sphere for their activity (though it might be asked, whether it were not better to take care of the children, who are already in the world, than to bring more into existence, in order to have them to take care of). How many others we know, who are suffering from ill health, merely from having nothing particular to do. “Go and visit the poor,” is always said. And the best, those who have the deepest feeling of the importance of this occupation, answer in their souls (if not aloud), “We do not know how. If we only go into the cottages to talk, we see little difference between gossiping with the poor, and gossiping with the rich; or, if our intercourse is to be merely grounded upon the “two-and-sixpence,” or the load of coals, we don’t know whether we do as much good as we do harm.” On finding a cottage, generally comfortable-looking and respectable, one day in the strangest state of nakedness and disorder, the woman answered, “La! now! why, when the district-visiting ladies comes, if we didn’t put every thing topsy-turvy, they wouldn’t give us anything.”

To be able to visit *well*, is not a thing which comes by instinct, but, on the contrary, is one of the rarest accomplishments. But, when attained, what a blessing to both visitors and visited!

The want of *necessary* occupation among English girls

must have struck every one. How usual it is to see families of five or six daughters at home, in the higher ranks, with no other occupation in life, but a class in a Sunday school. And what is that? A chapter of the Bible is opened at random, and the spiritual doctor, with no more idea of her patient's spiritual anatomy than she has plan for improving it, explains at random.

In the middle classes, how many there are who feel themselves burdensome to their fathers, or brothers, but who, not finding husbands, and not having the education to be governesses, do not know what to do with themselves.

Intellectual education is, however, as before said, not what we want to supply. Is intellect enough for the being who was sent here, like her great Master, to "finish" her Father's "work?" There was a woman once, who said that she was the "handmaid of the Lord." She was not the first, nor will she be the last, who has felt that this was really woman's only business on earth.

If, then, there are many women who live unmarried, and many more who pass the third of the usual term of life unmarried, and if intellectual occupation is not meant to be their end in life, what are they to do with that thirst for action, useful action, which every woman feels who is not diseased in mind or body? God planted it there. God, who has created nothing in vain. What were His intentions with regard to "unmarried women and widows?" How did He mean to employ them, to satisfy them?

For every want we can always find a divine supply. And accordingly, we see, in the very first times of Christianity, an apostolical institution for the employment of woman's powers directly in the service of God. We find them engaged as "servants of the Church." We read, in the Epistle

to the Romans, of a "Deaconess," as in the Acts of the Apostles, of "Deacons." Not only men were employed in the service of the sick and poor, but also women. In the fourth century, St. Chrysostom speaks of forty Deaconesses at Constantinople. We find them in the Western Church as late as the eighth,—in the Eastern, as the twelfth century. When the Waldenses, and the Bohemian and Moravian brothers began to arise out of the night of the middle ages, we find in these communities, formed after the model of the apostolical institutions, the office of Deaconesses, who were called *Presbyteræ*, established in 1457. "Many chose," it is said, "the single state, not because they expected thereby to reach a super-eminent degree of holiness, but that they might be the better able to care for the sick and the young."

Augusti's
Denkwür-
digkeiten,
xi. 220.

Mohrlen
Buchder
Wahrheits-
zeugen, i. 301.

Luther complains how few, in his neighbourhood, are found to fill the office of Deacons, saying that he must wait "till our Lord God makes Christians," and further adds, that "women have especial grace to alleviate woe, and the words of women move the human being more than those of men."

Luther's
Works
(Walch's
Edition), xi.
2754, ii. 1387.

In the sixteenth century it is well known how Robert von der Mark, prince of Sedan in the Netherlands, revived the institution of Protestant Sisters of Charity, and, instead of appropriating the revenues of the suppressed monasteries in his domains, devoted them to this purpose. In the first General-Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Lower Rhine and the Netherlands, at Wesel, 1568, we find the office of Deaconesses recommended, and, in the Classical Synod, of 1580, expressly established. In England they were not wanting. Among the Non-Conformists, under Elizabeth, 1576, Deaconesses were instituted during divine service, and received amidst the general prayer of the community. The Pilgrim Fathers of 1602—1625, who were

Histoire de
la Princi-
pauté de Se-
dan, par Pey-
ran, vol. ii.
chaps. 1 & 2.

Neal's His-
tory of the
Puritans,
i. 344.

driven first to Amsterdam and Leyden, then to North America, carried their Deaconesses with them. In Amsterdam, we read how “the Deaconess sat in her place at church with a little birchen rod in her hand, to correct the children,” and “how she called upon the young maidens for their services, when there were sick,” and how “she was obeyed like a mother in Israel.”

It thus appears that, long previous to the establishment of the Order of Sisters of Mercy, by S. Vincent de Paule, in 1633, the importance of the office of Deaconess had been recognised by all divisions of Christians; and they accordingly existed, *free from vows or cloistered cells*. So many believe this to be an institution borrowed from the Roman Catholic Church exclusively, and, on that account, are prejudiced against it, that we wish we had space to give the numerous other proofs of the existence of the office at different times, among all churches, and earliest in those of the Protestant faith.

We see, therefore, that God has not implanted an impulse in the hearts of women, without preparing a way for them to obey it.

Why did not the institution spread and flourish further? Perhaps this may be sufficiently explained by the fact, that there were no nursery-grounds—preparatory schools for Deaconesses, so that fitness for their office was, so to speak, accidental. This want is now supplied.

In Prussia, the system for the practical training of Deaconesses has spread in all directions.

In Paris, Strasburg, Echallens (in Switzerland), Utrecht, and England, the institution exists. Whether the blessing be greater to the class from which the labourers are taken, or to that among which they labour, it is hard to say. The In-

stitution of Pastor Fliedner, at Kaiserswerth, on the Rhine, near Düsseldorf, is now so well known that the history of its rise will, perhaps, be interesting.

The establishment of a manufactory, some years before the general peace, at Kaiserswerth, a small Roman Catholic town, had brought together a little colony of workmen, chiefly Protestant. The bankruptcy of the manufacturer, in 1822, deprived them of the means of supporting a pastor. M. Fliedner, being then only twenty-two years of age, and just entering on this cure, would not desert them. In 1823 and 1824, he travelled through Holland and England to collect funds sufficient to maintain a church in his little community. He succeeded, but this was the smallest part of the results of his journey. In England, he became acquainted with Mrs. Fry—and his attention having been thus turned to the fact, that prisons were but a school for vice, instead of for reformation, he formed, at Düsseldorf, in 1826, the first German society for improving prison discipline. He soon perceived how desolate is the situation of the woman, who, released from prison, but often without the means of subsistence is, as it were, violently forced back into crime. With one female criminal, with one volunteer (Mdlle. Göbel, a friend of Madame Fliedner), who came, without pay, to join the cause, he began his work in September, 1833, in a small summer-house in his garden. Between December and June of the next year, he received nine other penitents, of whom eight had been more than once in prison. A second volunteer was then found, who has since gone out as the wife of the Missionary Barnstein, to Borneo.

The Infant school was the next branch of the Institution, which was added in May, 1836, under a first-rate infant schoolmistress, Henrietta Frickenhaus, who still conducts it,

and has already trained more than 400 candidates for the office of infant schoolmistresses.

In October, of the same year, induced partly by the general feeling of the great deficiency of good nurses, partly by regret at seeing how much good female power was wasted, and also by the fact that the volunteers, who had come forward for the first Institution, wanted a further field for the education of their faculties, Pastor Fliedner established a hospital (with one patient, one nurse, and a cook), in the manufactory before spoken of, which was now vacant. The nurse, now the Deaconess Reichardt (sister of a missionary of that name, among the Jews in London), is still in the Institution; though too infirm for physical nursing, her services are found invaluable in conducting the devotions of the male patients, who look up to her as a mother, and in instructing and advising the probationers and younger Deaconesses. During the first year, the number of nurses thus volunteering, had increased to seven, but these were submitted to a probation of six months—Sister Reichardt only having been exempted, from her long experience and faithfulness in this department. From fifteen to eighteen patients were now received, so that the number of those nursed during the first year, in the Institution, amounted to sixty, besides twenty-eight at their own homes. The hospital having been established chiefly as a school for training the Deaconesses, all kinds of sick were received, though the proportion of recoveries thus afforded a less brilliant list at the close of the year.

Behind the present hospital is a large enclosed court, with outbuildings; and again, behind that, a walled garden, of about an acre, fit for the use of the patients. Beyond, lies a row of small houses, which Pastor Fliedner has hired, and in which the different branches of his Institution were esta-

blished, as they arose. First, on the right, is the Infant School, which numbers about forty children, and almost as many young women, training for infant schoolmistresses. These do not necessarily become Deaconesses, and most of them have chosen to remain independent—a fortunate thing for the Institution, which, with its present funds, would have provided with difficulty for the old age of so many.

Next to the infant school is the Penitentiary. Here the Institution, which sprung, in 1833, from the small beginning in the summer-house, was transplanted. It has now a large garden and field behind, stretching beyond the infant school, with farm yard and outbuildings.

Thirdly, comes the Orphan Asylum, where two families, twelve in each, of orphans,—chiefly the daughters of clergymen, missionaries, schoolmasters, and other respectable parents, live with their respective Deaconesses. These take the entire care of the children committed to their charge, sleep with them, eat with them, and instruct them in household work. This Institution is meant to become a nursery ground for future Deaconesses and teachers.

Connected with it is the Seminary (Normal school) for industrial, day, and infant schoolmistresses, who here receive a practical education in learning to teach (passing through the orphan asylum, the infant school, the parish day school, and the children's wards in the hospital), a theoretical education from a first-rate master, and some excellent female teachers, in every branch of knowledge necessary to them,—and a religious education from the pastor himself, and an assistant clergyman.

The other houses in the row are occupied by the Pastor Fliedner and his family, by the bureau, where the accounts of the Institution are kept by two clerks; and further on,

nearest the river, are the parish school, church, and vicarage. Pastor Fliedner has now resigned the care of the parish, which was become impossible in addition to that of the Institution.

In the Rhine are baths for the whole establishment, and the scrofulous children receive great benefit from them. Behind the row of houses are about forty acres of land, which supply the Institution with vegetables and herbs, and with pasture for eight cows and several horses. And the little summer-house, the starting point of the whole, still stands in the Pastor's garden.

We see by these details, how, with small funds, without a competition of architects, or vast plans for a "new and convenient" erection, using only the means and the buildings near at hand, the present Institution grew and flourished. It is impossible not to observe how different was this beginning from the way in which institutions are generally founded—a list of subscribers with some royal and noble names at the head—a double column of rules and regulations—a committee of great names begin (and end) most new enterprises. The regulations are made without experience. Honorary members abound, but where are the working ones? The scheme is excellent, but what are the results?

"Teach me Thy ways," is the perpetual cry of David in the Psalms;—and to watch and to imitate the ways of God is the only true wisdom. From the little germ comes up the forest tree so gradually that no one can tell when or how it grows. Pastor Fliedner began his work with two beds under a roof, not with a castle in the air, and Kaiserswerth is now diffusing its blessings and its Deaconesses over almost every Protestant land.

We have seen its beginning; let us now turn to its present state.

I.

THE HOSPITAL AND MOTHER-HOUSE OF THE
DEACONESSES.

THAT sickness is one of the means sent by God to soften the heart, is generally acknowledged. Let us go into one of the usual hospitals and see how this precious opportunity is turned to account. Instead of a school, whence the patients return home to their families, often renewed, generally improved, we see, as every one conversant with hospitals well knows, a school, it may almost be said, for immorality and impropriety—inevitable where women of bad character are admitted as nurses, to become worse by their contact with the male patients and the young surgeons—inevitable where the nurses have to perform *every* office in the male wards, which it is undesirable to exact from women of good character, how much more so from those of bad—inevitable where the examination of females must take place before a school of medical students. We see the nurses drinking, we see the neglect at night owing to their falling asleep. Where women undertake so toilsome an office, for hire, and not for love, it cannot be otherwise. We see the patients procuring spirits by feeing the nurses;—and yet there are many surgeons who still think that such women will tend their patients better than those who undertake the task from Christian motives. They are afraid of their patients being “excited” by “pious nurses.” Yet no

one can seriously believe that Christian influence is not desirable in times of sickness, as well as at other times. It is the abuse of this influence, it is *un-Christian* influence, which causes the fear and the jealousy we so often see. No one can seriously believe that the word, let fall by the nurse, during a restless night, has not a better effect upon the suffering patient than the set visit of the chaplain. Educate, qualify the nurses to exercise this influence, to drop the word in season, and this jealousy will fall away of itself.

But how has Pastor Fliedner secured such a class of women, as he finds himself able to trust with spiritual influence in this Kaiserswerth hospital? First, by his own self-denial. An institution will never succeed, which is intended to be worked mainly by the middle and lower classes, if left to occasional inspection. The middle classes cannot be expected to give up the idea of saving money, the “cynosure” of English eyes, as long as they can say, “The directors might, if they pleased, out of their easy chairs and good dinners, give me as high a salary as my services are worth.” In Kaiserswerth there are, for *all*, the same privations, the same self-denial, the same object,—one spirit, one love, one Lord.

Another secret of Pastor Fliedner’s education is, that he really, not nominally, delegates his authority. Every master and parent knows how difficult this is. He does not like to see another do ill, what he can do well. He doubts how far it is right to allow it, and much as he feels the importance of forming his monitors or children, he ends by waiting till they are fit for their office, like the man who waited to go into the water till he had learnt to swim. Pastor Fliedner, from the unexampled plainness of his instructions to his nurses, and from the constant vigilance with which he follows them up, guards both

them and the patients from danger. Every week he gives a lecture to the nurses, before which, each has to report to him all that she has read to her patients at morning and evening prayers during the week, and generally what has passed in her ward, and to receive his advice as to how she should proceed. He then places before them particular cases which are likely to occur, *e. g.*, where the patient is distressed in mind, where he is self-righteous, &c., and questions them what, in such cases, they would do—attentively listening to, and correcting their answers. His instructions are never in the shape of a formal lecture, but of question and answer. He shows them how they are to approach the hearts of the patients, without assuming the tone of a father confessor, how they are to act in cases of emergency, and at all times they have access to him to ask his advice.

How ready these women become to seize the moment for making an impression on the hearts of their patients, particularly on those of the children, may be illustrated by one or two incidents :

One morning, in the boys' ward, as they were about to have prayers, just before breakfast, two of the boys quarrelled about a hymn-book. The "sister" was uncertain, for a moment, what to do ; they could not pray in that state of mind, yet excluding them from the prayer was not likely to improve them. She told a story of her own childhood—how one night she had been cross with her parents, and putting off her prayers till she felt good again, had fallen asleep. The children were quite silent for a moment, and shocked at the idea that anybody should go to bed without praying. The two boys were reconciled, and prayers took place.

Another time, one of the boys stole a piece of bread out of another's drawer. The imputation rested upon two, and

the sister asked them to confess. No one answered, and breakfast went on as usual; after the meal, they urged the sister to play with them, but she said that she felt too sad at heart. Still no one spoke. Later, one of the men-nurses, a faithful old servant, who has been there since the Institution began, made a little sermon to the young sinners. Shortly after this, a child came running to tell the sister that William wanted to confess, which he did, and begged her forgiveness. She told him it was God's forgiveness that he needed, and she would pray with him for it. The rest of the day he was as merry as usual. At night she told him that she had not punished him because she thought he was sorry, that the object of punishment was to remind us of the fault we had committed, but that he seemed to have forgotten it. Would he like to punish himself as a sort of reminder? The other patients need know nothing about it. He said he should, but he could think of nothing. She said, would he like to give up part of his bread at dinner, for a week? He said, no, not that; but when she told him to choose himself, he finally agreed. The next day at dinner, she broke his bread in two, and gave it to him. He gave back the larger half, and continued to do so during the week. She thought afterwards she had been guilty of weakness in keeping it secret from the other children. The sin had been public, so ought the reparation to have been. These trifling anecdotes are only given to show how these women are really training to use a spiritual influence with thought and discretion.

One great reason which deters women of education from this work of love is, that, having seen the unutterable dulness of a common hospital, they say to themselves, "If I am to have no moral or spiritual work to do, if I am only to sweep, and comb out dirty heads, and dress loathsome wounds, as I

have no idea of buying heaven by such works, I may as well leave them to those who must earn their livelihood, and not take away their trade." Let such as feel this go to Kaiserswerth, and see the delicacy, the cheerfulness, the grace of Christian kindness, the moral atmosphere, in short, which may be diffused through a hospital, by making it one of God's schools, where both patients and nurses come to learn of Him.

We are aware of the difficulty and the disgust, which would attend a woman who wished to learn in a hospital, as commonly conducted. None such need deter her from visiting Kaiserswerth. First, the kindness of the sisters in imparting their own knowledge is as remarkable, when contrasted with the jealousy of nurses and surgeons, in general, as the refinement with which it is done. The Pastor's spirit seems to pervade the whole sisterhood.

The hospital contains above 100 beds, and is divided into four departments—for men, for women, for boys, and for children, which last includes girls under seventeen, and boys under six years of age.

The wards are all small. This gives, it is true, more trouble, but also, far more decency and comfort. None of the female wards have more than four beds. When an examination takes place, or when a particular case requires it, the patient can thus easily have a ward to herself. In no private house is decorum more observed than in this hospital, and the influence this continues to exercise upon the patients after their return home, can well be believed.

The male wards are served by men-nurses, of whom there are five, who have been educated in the hospital, and are under the authority of the sisters. After 8 P.M., no sister goes into the men's wards; the men-nurses sleep in the wards, and sit up in case of need. Even in the boys' ward the

sister does not sleep. No sister is called upon to do anything for a male patient but that which, in a private house, a lady would perform for a brother. Everything else is done by the men-nurses, who, brought up in this atmosphere, have always been found faithful and careful. The most fastidious could find nothing to object to in the intercourse which takes place between patient, surgeon, and sisters.

No medical man resides in the hospital. Why should he? In a private family, a patient only receives a visit once, or, perhaps, twice a day, from the physician. Why he should *not* reside in the house is sufficiently obvious. He is then master. Whereas, at Kaiserswerth, the clergyman is master. The sisters are, however, bound, of course, punctually to obey the directions of the medical man, and they are too well trained not to do so, with far more correctness than is found in other hospitals.

The superintending sister of every ward is always present during the daily visits of the medical man. The apothecary is a sister, and she also goes the round of the patients with him, noting down all his prescriptions and directions, which she afterwards transcribes into a book. By the presence of this sister, and the head sister of the ward, all giggling, all familiarity, everything but the strictest propriety is prevented. The sisters are perfectly well bred.

Every head sister has family prayers morning and evening, in her ward; she generally sings a hymn with the patients, reads a very short portion of the Bible, or of some other book chosen by the Pastor, and prays. All the male patients who are able to leave the wards, assemble in a schoolroom for prayer, which is conducted by the Sister Reichardt, already mentioned, whose practical remarks on the Bible are listened to by the patients with eager interest.

The sister in the children's wards seldom reads to them;

as what is *told* to children seems to them true ; what is *read* seems to them to come out of the book—and so stays *in* the book, not in their minds. In the morning, she relates to the elder children a story out of the Bible, sings with them, and prays, not out of a book, but out of her own (we will not say head, but) heart. Afterwards she relates to the younger children a simpler story out of the Bible, showing them, at the same time, a picture, as children's eyes must be appealed to. The Old and New Testament are thus gone through. In the evening, she does the same, but the story is not taken from the Bible, but from missionaries' reports, histories of conversions, &c. Children are always interested in missions. On Sunday, as the children only go to church once, she occupies them, during afternoon service, with looking out parallel passages in their Bibles, which interests them, and prevents that dull and dead reading of the Bible, which, as it is prompted by no feeling, so leads to none.

The children are a great deal in the garden ; as they are mostly scrofulous, this is of the greatest importance, and so far Kaiserswerth has a great advantage over a large town.

The night-watching seems remarkably well managed. It must be our part to carry out what we can discover of God's intentions with regard to sickness. "Thy will be done," does not mean "Thy will be done" in great things, while we wish ours to be done in small. He desires to lead not only the patients, but also the nurses to himself. If a nurse's physical powers are not too much exhausted, night-watching may have a greater influence on her mind than any other hour. In the darkness, God appeared to the Israelites as a pillar of light and fire ; in the day, only as a pillar of smoke. At Kaiserswerth, the nurse is made to feel the night-watch more a blessing than a burden. She never sits up more than

three hours and a half, and the whole establishment takes it in turn, so that it comes once a week at most to each sister. The sisters go to bed at ten, and rise at five. One sister sleeps in every ward; but the watcher is for the whole house; at half-past one, A.M., she is relieved by another. Every hour she makes the round of all the wards, goes softly into every room, excepting those of the male patients; and thus a double advantage is secured, the watcher is not likely to fall asleep; and she can minister to the little wants of the patients, not dangerously ill, without waking the ward sisters. In cases of severe illness, and in surgical cases, the sister of the ward is, of course, obliged to sit up. The station of the watcher is in the children's room, where her attention is most frequently wanted, as infants are received at any age.

But we are not describing the Hospital as a hospital, but as a Training School for the Deaconesses. *Probation* is its grand principle—one which we are familiar with in all God's dealings with us; one which St. Paul speaks of, when he says, "And let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

A period of from one to three years is allowed for probation. As nothing is offered to the sisters, neither the prospect of saving money, nor reputation, nothing but the opportunity of working in the cause for which Christ worked and still works; so, if this does not appear to be their ruling principle, they are dismissed, however painful to the Pastor. They are also at liberty to leave any day. The probationary sister receives nothing for six months, but food and lodging; after that, a small salary. The Deaconesses, that is, those who, after their probation, have received a solemn blessing in the church, are paid, but only sufficient to keep them in clothes. Board, lodging, and the Deaconess's upper dress are given to

them. There is therefore no pecuniary inducement to come to this work; but a provision is secured for those who have become ill or infirm in the service, to whom the "Mother-house" always opens her arms. "You have been wounded with honour in the field," as the Pastor said one day to a Deaconess, about to undergo a painful operation.

No establishment can subsist, which does not offer this prospect to those who have disinterestedly spent the best years of life in its service. And it is beautiful to see the attachment which the Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth feel to their "Mother-house."

The Christian liberty of the Deaconess is carefully preserved. Even during the five years, for which a Deaconess engages herself after her solemn consecration in the Church, should marriage, or her parents, or any important duty claim her, she is free, she is never held fast to conclude the term of years. The Institution may thus be said to be a school for wives as well as for sisters, as no one can suppose that these women are not the better fitted for the duties of wives and mothers by their education here.

The Institution stands in the place of a parent to the Deaconesses, who have been sent out to other establishments, such as Hospitals, Poor-houses, &c. It has the right of recalling them, without giving any reason to the directors who have, on the other hand, the right of dismissing sisters and of asking for others. The Institutions of Paris, Strasburg, Echallens, and Utrecht, have reserved to themselves the same right as that of Kaiserswerth. Even Deaconesses may sometimes disagree among themselves, and a timely exchange may save much evil. This provision is necessary, if the Institution is to remain a "Mother-house" to the Deaconesses, to afford them protection from the demands (often exorbitant)

of the other institutions which they serve, and to continue their home for times of sickness and old age. The Deaconess has a vote on the reception of a new sister into the Institution, and in the choice of a superintendent.

The great object of the Pastor appears to be to interest them in the progress of the kingdom of God upon earth. With them, "Thy kingdom come," does not mean, as it does with many, only "my salvation come." They have a personal feeling for the coming of the kingdom; they watch with keen interest for all that can be heard on the subject.

Every second Monday evening in the month, the Pastor meets them in the Sisters' Dining-room, to communicate all the letters which have been received from sisters abroad; every first Monday to communicate any interesting missionary news; another evening to celebrate the anniversary of the Institution, &c.; and on these occasions, every one relates anything which may have come to her own knowledge upon the subject; the evening ends with singing and prayer.

II.

PENITENTIARY AND ASYLUM FOR FEMALES RELEASED FROM PRISON.

It contains, at this time, twelve in number, chiefly about twenty-three years of age. As the object of it is to teach them again to know and to love that family life, of which most have been so long deprived, which many have never known, the number is restricted to fifteen. Their stay must be entirely voluntary, so that, if not inclined to submit to the

regulations of the house, they are not received or not detained. They have a meadow, a field, and a large garden, which they cultivate entirely themselves with the spade, under the direction of a sister, who had fortunately been brought up in a nursery garden. To those who have had experience among this class of persons, it need not be explained that the pure air, hard exercise, and interest of out-of-door work, are found far more beneficial than needle-work, in occupying their thoughts, improving their health, and qualifying them for places in the country, which the Institution always chooses in preference. No one but themselves enters their territory, and they have each a separate cell at night upon the American system, which seclusion has operated most beneficially on their character. The cell is only furnished with a bed and a chair, as the asylum is to be a state of humiliation. A row of cells has lately been built for them, looking out upon the yard.

Indeed, the whole of this branch is kept quite separate from the rest of the Institution. It has its separate accounts, its separate grounds, its separate subscription list, its separate reports, as it is thought better not to mix up the affairs of this department with the others.

They have cows (stall-fed), and poultry, and they are found universally fond of and kind to animals, so that the care of them exercises a good influence on their characters. One Sunday night, when the different employments for the week were being portioned out (one girl has the care of the kitchen, another of the house, others wash, others work in the garden), the one to whom the dairy was given, a tall, fierce, hardened-looking girl, like Giorgione's Judith, jumped for joy like a child.

They go out to wash in the families belonging to the

Institution, but in no others. The great difficulty is in preventing them from procuring brandy.

If during eight to fifteen months (less time is not considered sufficient trial) they have conducted themselves well, the Institution procures them places. Some have, however, been two years in the asylum. These places are generally sought for in the country, rarely in towns, and never in a public-house, always where they are least known, as far as possible from their previous place of abode. Certain terms are made for them, among which are that they shall be admitted to family prayer, that they shall attend divine service, that the pastor of the place shall be apprized of their coming, that they shall not be dismissed without giving notice to Pastor Fliedner, &c. A correspondence is always kept up between them and the asylum; they are at all times permitted to visit it, they are themselves visited, invited to the yearly celebration (on the 17th September) of the foundation of the asylum, at which the Pastor presides. If they have conducted themselves well, and change their situation, a second is found for them, and a lodging allowed them meanwhile at the Institution. The letters which some of the girls wrote to the superintending sister, during her absence from the asylum, in private nursing, were very touching.

About a fourth of those received turn out well, but these unformed characters are so changeable,—one day, so well disposed, another, without apparent reason, so hard or so passionate, that little dependence can be placed upon them under a year. One of those now in the asylum has been in the House of Correction thirty times. Often, however, they deeply repent. One was found at two o'clock in the morning, by the superintending sister, still upon her knees in her cell. One came to her twice in the night, in great trouble of

conscience, to ask her to teach her how to pray, she complained that the sister did not advise her like the others; the sister said that she waited till they wished for it.

For physical reasons, their food is poor—they have meat only twice a week, but discontent is not their fault; they see that the two sisters have the same, and are always thankful. They rise at five, work in the garden, if fine, till breakfast time, then family prayer, at which they sing; the sister explains a chapter in the Bible, and prays. One of the girls says grace.—The sister is always in the room with them, and, while sedentary work is going on, such as preparing vegetables for winter's use, sewing or spinning, she relates a story to them, or calls upon them to sing a hymn or to relate something themselves. One of them (a girl who had murdered her children), narrated one day an incident which she had read, which lasted an hour and a half; for persons, whose lightness of character is proverbial, this is much—all the others attentively listening or suggesting. They receive a weekly lesson from the chaplain. They have besides lessons in singing, and those who are quite ignorant, in reading and writing, from voluntary teachers out of the Normal School.

The house consists of a kitchen, work-room, ironing-room, and cells.

The income of the asylum last year (including £30, the produce of the milk and eggs which they sell to the Hospital, and £36 paid by some of the penitents themselves, the remainder having been supplied by subscriptions) was £200,—the expenses, including hire of house and land, £225.

One hundred and ninety-seven have been received since the beginning of the Institution, in 1833. It is meant to be a place of transition between the prison and social life,

where they may, at the same time, qualify themselves for service, and prove and strengthen their desire of reformation. They must, therefore, bring with them a certificate from the prison chaplain, that they at least hope to reform. No one is ever received a second time into the asylum, which they all know. It is not thought desirable to retain them longer than two years, as there is not sufficient work to keep them fully occupied.

III.

“PARISH” DEACONESSES.

ONE of the Kaiserswerth sisters is Deaconess of the parish of Kaiserswerth, and many have been sent out as such to distant parishes, at the request of pastors or of visiting societies.

We know how much the want of capacity to *visit well* depresses and discourages our best meant efforts. We say to ourselves, “But what good do I do? I ask the mother how many children go to school; perhaps I preach a little; I give a little broth and a blanket; I read a chapter out of the Bible, which they don’t understand; if somebody is ill, I send the doctor, who opens the ulcer too soon, that he may not have the trouble of coming again. How deplorable this sort of intercourse is. I see disorder, dirt, unthrift, want of management, but I don’t know how to help it. What right have I to find fault with them? and I am too ignorant myself to show them how to do better. I see illness, but I don’t know how to manage it. And yet that would be the very thing I should like to do, through the body to find the way to the heart of the patient. What I want, is something to

do in the cottage; to sit on a chair and ask questions, is not the way to have real intercourse from heart to heart with the poor or with anybody. But if I knew how to nurse them, opportunities for doing more would arise of themselves, and I should have some definite errand to take me in. What is said with intention rarely does good; it is only what *says itself* in the natural every-day intercourse, which strikes and bears fruit. Everybody knows this from their own experience of what has most influenced *themselves* in life."

The question is now how to educate ourselves so as to supply this our deficiency; such an education the Kaiserswerth Parish Deaconesses receive; in the Hospital, the School, the Asylum, the Household, they learn the wants of the poor, the wants in themselves, and how to treat them. It is beautiful to see the accomplished Parish Deaconess visiting. She makes her rounds in the morning; she performs little offices for the sick, which do not require a nurse, living in the house, but which the relations cannot do well; she teaches the children little trades, knitting, making list shoes, &c.; and all this with a cordiality and charm of manner, which wins sufficient confidence from the parents to induce them to *ask* to be taught to sweep and cook, and put their house in order. The Parish Deaconess at Kaiserswerth is continually receiving curious little notes written to ask her advice upon such and such household matters, and wherever she goes, the cottage gradually puts on a tidy appearance.

How often a parish clergyman sighs for such an assistant, how often lady visitors sigh to be able to render such assistance!

It may be a question whether it would not be better for each parish to send one of its own inhabitants to such an Institution as Kaiserswerth to learn, than for a stranger to be sent out from thence. She would probably be more at home

among the people ; but this is a matter of opinion. The fact remains that we must *learn* to visit, that we must be qualified to teach.

It has sometimes been said that Protestants can never be found to expose themselves to death in the way in which Roman Catholics will do, because the former do not believe that they shall win heaven by such martyrdom. This has been proved to be false by the undaunted heroines who have gone out from Kaiserswerth, wherever cholera, typhus fever, or other infectious diseases have raged, and, after saving many hundreds of lives, have died at their post. Last year, twenty-one sisters were engaged in nursing in towns, wasted by the cholera. Most of them caught the infection, two, having "fought the good fight and finished their course," went to their eternal home.

IV.

NORMAL SCHOOL, ORPHAN ASYLUM, AND INFANT SCHOOL.

WE have said little about the Normal School, not because it is less interesting than the other departments, but because this subject is better understood in England. The great amount of training which Pastor Fliedner himself gives the candidates (for the situation of Infant, Day, and Industrial Schoolmistresses), must, however, be mentioned. For instance, he takes the narrative in the Bible, which comes next in course, and gives a lecture upon it to the assembled class of candidates. She, whose turn it is to teach the next day in school, relates the story to him alone in the evening. In the morning, he comes to the school to hear her tell it to the children ; and, at the next lecture, he makes his remarks

to her upon the manner in which she has done so, the faults she has made, and the ways of exciting greater interest in the children. As some of the candidates are for Infant Schools, some for Day Schools (the former of whom practice in the Infant School of the Institution, the latter, in the Day School of the Parish), he shows in his lecture what points will interest the older, what the younger children most. Great stress is laid upon instructing children *vivâ voce*. The teacher, Mr. Ranke, also gives them admirable practical lessons in the art of teaching.

In the Orphan Asylum, each family lives with its Deaconess exactly as her children. Some of them have already become Deaconesses or Teachers, some have returned home. When a new child is admitted, a little feast celebrates its arrival, at which the Pastor himself presides, who understands children so well that his presence, instead of being a constraint, serves to make the little new-comer feel herself at home. She chooses what is to be sung, she has a little present from the Pastor, and, after tea, at the end of the evening, she is prayed for.

The Infant School does not differ so much from English Infant Schools as to require a separate account, though we would gladly describe the unwearied playfulness of the mistress and her pretty little games for the children. All the candidates must be there for one hour a day, and each in turn must undertake the first class for a whole day once a *fortnight*; the second class once a *week*.

The whole of this large Institution was supported last year for a sum of less than £3,500; such is the economy and self-denial practised by the conductors. The subscriptions, &c., amounted to £3,200, so that a deficit of £300 remains.

When we see how much good may be done here with how little money, does it not act as an inducement to go and do likewise ?

The number of Deaconesses is 116, of whom ninety-four are already consecrated (the consecration is simply a solemn blessing in the Church, without vows of any kind); twenty-two are still probationary. Of these, sixty-seven are in hospitals, parishes, and poor-houses, in Germany, England, America, and at Jerusalem; the rest are at Kaiserswerth. More are eagerly desired. From all parts of Germany, from Constantinople, and even from the East Indies, requests for Deaconesses are constantly pouring in, which cannot be satisfied. More labourers are wanted, and more will come. If this may be their future, the fear of becoming "old maids" will disappear; if they may be instructed how to become the active "handmaids of the Lord," what life can they desire more? That English women can work, and work successfully in this cause, is proved by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity. Shall the Roman Catholic Church do all the work? Has not the Protestant the same Lord, who accepted the services not only of men, but also of women? The harvest is ripe. Where are the sick and the poor wanting? Let those women of England, who sit in busy idleness, look at Germany. There are your sisters all at work, Christ in their midst. Let Him not say, I have called my English handmaidens, but they would not answer. I stood at their door and knocked, but they would not open.

* The Rev. Pastor Fliedner receives boarders in the Institution, who, without intending to become Deaconesses, wish to qualify themselves in general for Christian life. They are boarded and lodged for 10s. 6d. a week, receiving, in addition, all the benefits of this admirable education, and there is not a sister in the establishment who does not endeavour in this to second the Pastor's intentions.